

THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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CONTENTS

	Page
THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL (II)	65
By the Reverend Professor Hermann Sasse, Lic. Theol. (Berlin), S.T.M. (Hartford), D.Theol. (Erlangen), of Im- manuel Theological Seminary, Adelaide.	
HISTORY, EXEGESIS AND PRAYER (I)	79
By the Rev. Professor E. F. Osborn, M.A., B.D. (Melb.), Ph.D. (Cantab.), of Queen's College, University of Mel- bourne.	
BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES	88

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THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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The Second Vatican Council (II)

5.

The main task of the forthcoming council will be to finish, in a world that is totally different from the world in which the First Vatican Council met, what had to be left unfinished in 1870. A scheme for the "Constitution on the Church of Christ" which contained in 15 chapters a full doctrine of the Church was distributed and comments were solicited. But the scheme was never debated. Only its 11th chapter "On the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff" was taken up. Augmented by a statement on the infallibility it became the basis of what on 18th July was proclaimed as the "First Constitution on the Church of Christ" (*Pastor Aeternus*). All other ecclesiological problems were left to a future "second constitution" which is to be expected from the Second Vatican Council.

One of the most serious criticisms with which *Pastor Aeternus* met already at the council was the objection made by outstanding bishops of the minority that one cannot define properly the office of the pope without defining also the office of the bishop. If the Scripture passage is quoted in which the office of the keys is entrusted to Peter one must also take into account the passages in which the same function is given to all apostles. It seems that today there is general agreement among Roman Catholics that the decision of 1870 needs to be supplemented in this direction. At that time the attention was so exclusively focused on the doctrine of the papal infallibility as taught in chapter 4 of *Pastor Aeternus* that the implications of what chapter 3 teaches on the nature of the primacy were not fully realised. If the power (*potestas*) which the pope exercises over the entire church and all its pastors and faithful is a direct, an immediate (*immediata*) and truly episcopal (*vere episcopalis*) power, how is this office of the bishop universal related to the office of the local bishop? Are not the bishops, as it was said already in 1870, actually vicars general of the universal bishop in their dioceses, especially

since according to can. 329 CIC, which is based on the decree of the Vatican Council, only the pope can nominate a bishop? *Pastor Aeternus* claims that "this immediate power of the Supreme Pontiff" does not obviate "that ordinary and immediate power of jurisdiction of the bishops by which they, made bishops by the Holy Spirit (cp. Acts 20:28), as successors of the apostles feed and rule as true pastors the individual flocks entrusted to them." The power of the bishops is rather "asserted, strengthened and vindicated by the supreme and universal pastor" (Denzinger 1828). How this claim is to be understood, how it is possible that within the church two "immediate" episcopal powers co-exist which do not interfere with each other, but rather belong together, this question will have to be answered by the council in a doctrinal statement on the nature of the episcopal office. From the ongoing discussions it may be concluded that the emphasis will be not on the office of the diocesan bishop only and his power to rule his flock, but on the episcopate as a body which subordinate to and in communion with "the first of the bishops" rules the entire church. In a thought-provoking essay "Le premier des eveques" in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* (Paris), June, 1960, Father G. Dejaifve, S.J., has tried to suggest such a solution on the basis of thoughts expressed by some outstanding Fathers of the First Vatican Council: "Christ has put Peter over the whole church in the midst of an apostolic college to which he has confided a saving mission to be carried out in unity. He alone remains the last source, the fullness (pleroma) of all apostolic power. If the souverain pontiff inherits this plenitude, as the Council of the Vatican has called to mind, this can be meant only in the sense of an administrator, a *minister generalissimus*, as the Bishop of Granada put it at the Council of Trent, and with the intention that he should communicate what Christ gives him to his brethren who are his associates and co-responsible for the carrying out of his mission proper" (loc. cit. p. 579). The author adds a quotation from Laynez at Trent who, while believing that Christ has given directly (*immediate*) to the apostles their jurisdiction, claimed: "To him (i.e., Peter) Christ gave all jurisdiction in order that he might confer it to others." Will this or a similar suggestion be acceptable to the Eastern Churches? The Eastern patriarchs and bishops can never admit that the episcopal power is in any way communicated by the pope. They can never accept as a lawful and valid decision the anathema expressed in the canon added to the 3rd chapter (Denz. 1831) against those

who deny "the full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the Church universal, not only in matters pertaining to faith and morals, but also in those which pertain to the discipline and the government of the whole church on earth," and even against those who deny, "that this his power is an ordinary and immediate power over all churches and each single church and over all and single pastors and faithful" (Denz. 1831). How can any Eastern church accept that without denying what it has taught and confessed throughout all centuries about the episcopal office? Rome, on the other hand, has never refused to recognise not only the orders of the schismatic churches of the East, but also the power of jurisdiction which the schismatic bishops exercise at least in connection with the administration of the sacraments. What is the relation between such episcopal office, conferred on behalf of the whole Church outside the Roman orbit, to the episcopal office in the Roman Communion? Can there be a connection of such bishops with the pope of which they are not conscious and which has never been expressed in words or deeds? The law that the pope must name a bishop (can. 329) and that no episcopal consecration can be given without the papal mandate (can. 953) applies only to the Latin Church, for which alone the *Codex Iuris Canonici* is binding law, and to the Eastern churches in communion with Rome as far as the existing canons demand that. These circumstances make it possible and imperative for Roman theologians to try to find an interpretation of the primacy which would do full justice to the dignity of the bishops as successors of the apostles and their immediate power of jurisdiction, without violating the "irreformable" decree of the Vatican Council? With Christian sympathy we must follow these discussions. Will they lead to the reunion of the two great branches of pre-Reformation Catholic Christendom whose tragic separation was not caused by doctrinal reasons, but by "non-theological factors" which are, in the last analysis, a version of a cultural and political contrast, Greece and Rome, East and West, which goes back into pre-Christian times and underlies our whole civilisation.

6.

A new doctrine on the office of the bishops will be a chapter of "The Second Constitution on the Church of Christ" for which the Roman Church has waited since 1870. Such constitution would have to take up the whole content of the scheme, questions like the nature of the church, its unity, visibility, necessity, its relation to other societies.

At first sight it might seem strange that the Roman Church with its elaborate doctrinal system has so far no dogma on the question what the church is. It is not surprising that the Eastern Orthodox Church possesses no ecclesiological dogma except the article of the Nicene Creed, "I believe (the Greek text adds: in) one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church," because none of the Ecumenical Councils has said more. The Fathers have dealt with the Church in their exposition of the symbol (i.e., Cyril of Jerusalem cat 18, 22ff.) and occasionally when rejecting heresies. But in vain one would look for an article on the church in the dogmatics of the Eastern (John of Damask) and the Western Church. It was the Reformation only that caused theological definitions of the Church. The Reformers who found themselves excommunicated by Rome had to show that they were not excommunicated from the true Church. Hence we find since the 7th article of the Augsburg Confession of 1530 in all Reformed confessions, including the Anglican 19th Article, doctrinal statements on the nature of the Church. Trent did not take up that matter, but the Catechismus Romanus of 1566 gave in Part I an elaborate explanation of the 9th article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints." This important document, however, is not regarded as dogma. What all statements on the Church in the 16th century have in common is that they start with the idea of the church as "congregation," "assembly" of the faithful. This corresponds to the original meaning of the word "ecclesia." It is the method of the Greek Fathers who always started from the meaning of "ecclesia" in the Greek Bible of the Old and New Testament (see Cyril loc. cit.). It is even followed by the Catechismus Romanus which begins with the etymology of the Greek word: ecclesia means *evocatio*. In contradistinction from "synagoga" it is used to denote the "Christian community" (*rem publicam Christianam*), the "congregations of the faithful" (*fidelium congregationes*), the "Christian people" (*Christianus populus*). "In one word, the Church (ecclesia), as St. Augustine says, is the faithful people (*populus fidelis*) dispersed over the whole earth" (qu. 2, 2). As the Lutheran and the Reformed confessions, so the Catechismus Romanus mentions the designation of the church as "body of Christ," but along with other terms (bride, house, family, flock) and not as the description proper from which the definition has to start. This older usage is confirmed by the liturgy. In the De tempore orations of the Roman Missal *populus* is used for the church more than 50 times, *corpus* explicitly only once. In the Canon Missae the church as the whole

family of God (*cuncta familia tua*), as God's holy people (*plebs tua sancta*) offers, together with the clergy (*nos servi tui*), the sacrifice. The modern idea that the Church as the body of Christ offers the body and blood of Christ in the sacrifice of the mass is foreign to the liturgy and to the dogma (Trent Sess. 22; Denz. 938ff.) of the Roman Church. This is a conclusion from the idea that "body of Christ" is the essential designation of the Church. It seems to be a product of the modern Liturgical Movement.

It will be a great event in the history of Christian doctrine when the Second Vatican Council takes up the dogma of the Church. Eastern Orthodox theology is satisfied with the present state of things. The Eastern Churches confess the article of the Nicene Creed and leave it to the theologians to explain it. They even find it appropriate to refrain from dogmatising on it. "The Church defies definition because it is a living reality." But no Christian theology and no church can abstain from answering the question how the great passages of the New Testament on the Church are to be understood. As the Church in the 16th century had to say what it meant by the words of the Creed, "Who *for us* men and *for our salvation* came down from heaven," so the Church in the modern world has to say what it means when confessing "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." Ecclesiology is one of the great theological problems for all Christendom. How will Rome approach this problem? The scheme prepared for the First Vatican Council started with the definition of the Church as the mystical body of Christ (chapter 1) and developed the ecclesiology from this concept of the Church. This met with strong criticism, as the written opinions of almost 300 bishops show.¹ It seems that only since the middle of the 19th century the emphasis has been shifted from the Church as the people of God to the Church as the body of Christ. This is obviously a result of the great rediscovery of the Church and the corresponding revival of ecclesiology which took place since the end of the Napoleonic wars in all Christian nations and in all denominations of Christendom, not only in Roman Catholicism (France, Germany, Spain), but also in the Church of Russia (since Chomjakow), in the Tractarian Movement in England, and in all Lutheran and Reformed churches of Europe. It is the great counter-movement against the dissolution of the idea of the church in the pietistic and rationalistic movements of the 18th century. The connection with the development

1. Mansi Collectio Conciliorum Vol. 51, 731-930. Since Mansi is not available to the author he takes this from M. D. Koster, *Ekklesiologie im Werden*, Paderborn 1940, p. 20. The documents of the Council itself, including the Schema De Ecclesia Christi, are available in Fredberg's collection of 1872.

of secular sociology from the 18th century understanding of all human society as based on a "social contract" of individuals to the new understanding of the social life as a life of social organisms in the philosophy of Romanticism is obvious. In European Catholicism, J. A. Möhler is the great turning-point who under the influence of German Idealism (Schleiermacher, Hegel) — which must make his theories suspect to the theologian — had developed the new idea of the Church as the embodiment of the Spirit of Christ, and later in his *Symbolics* (1832) which has influenced all churches of Europe, as "Jesus Christ living on in the history of mankind." This idea is to be found already earlier, e.g., with Bossuet who could say: "What is the Church? . . . The Church is Jesus Christ, but expanded and communicated." But only since Möhler's "Symbolics" has this view been generally accepted. It has become the common possession of Catholics and Protestants. Not only the Anglicans claim that the Church is Christ living on in the history of mankind. Even an outstanding leader of American Liberal Protestantism spoke in his essay on "the Nature of the Church" at Lausanne 1927 of "the Church as the extension of her Lord's Incarnation" — whatever he may have understood by "incarnation" — and Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls the "collective person" of the Church "Christ existing as congregation" (*Sanctorum Communio*, p. III ff.) The Church, he says, is "Christ Himself present." So he understands the term "body of Christ" for the Church. The Church "is not only a means to an end, but it is at the same time an end in itself; it is Christ Himself present; hence 'to be in Christ' and 'to be in the Church' is one and the same thing."

In this context it must be understood that modern Roman ecclesiology does no longer start from the concept of the Church as the people of God, the assembly of Christians, as the *Catechismus Romanus* in harmony with the entire Western theological tradition did⁽²⁾, but from the idea of the mystical body of Christ. One notices a certain embarrassment in the great Catholic works on dogmatics. Where is the place of ecclesiology in the dogmatic system? Scheeben who now is generally regarded as the greatest dogmatician in German Catholicism at the time of the Vatican Council, a man of flawless orthodoxy, was never quite sure where the doctrine of the Church belongs. He dealt with the Church partly in connection with the Christology — where it belongs if the Church is the continuation of the incarnation, as also Aquinas deals with the Church

2. J. H. Newman has given in paragraph 4 of Tract 90 an impressive enumeration of testimonies.

as the mystical body of Christ and head of the Church in the Christology (*Summa theol.* III, quaestio 8), partly — in “The Mysteries of Christianity” — in connection with the Eucharist. The real place of the doctrine of the Church is, as the Creeds show, in the “Third Article,” between the doctrine of the Holy Spirit on the one hand and the sacraments and the Last Things on the other. Since all these articles have an eschatological meaning — the Holy Spirit is poured out “in the last days” (Acts 2:17), in the sacraments our future salvation is anticipated — here the Church finds its proper place. For the Church also belongs according to the New Testament to the Last Things as the true people of God redeemed from this aeon. If this is not realised, if the ecclesiology is not treated in its essential context with eschatology, the doctrine of the Church becomes homeless in the whole of the Christian doctrine and loses its biblical content. This danger becomes obvious in modern Catholic dogmatics which put the ecclesiology into the prolegomena, the “fundamental theology,” as e.g., Lercher does it in his *Institutiones* the first chapters of which deal with “the true religion,” “the Church of Christ,” “Scripture and Tradition.” This then leads to such an impossible question as “Holy Writ or Holy Church?” (G. T. Tavad) which none of the apostles would have understood.

Warning voices have been raised against the attempts to understand the nature of the Church from the concept of the Body of Christ. The profound doctrine of Paul on the Church as “one body in Christ” (Rom. 12:5), “the body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12), and the body whose head Christ is (Eph. Col.) will in all its implications be understood only when we shall see Christ in His glory. It is the last, not the first word of all ecclesiology. Where it is made the first, the inevitable consequence is a *theologia gloriae* in which we sinful men, by trying to make visible that which will become visible only on the Last Day when Christ’s glory will become manifest are unknowingly wiping out the border-line between Christ and the Christians, and this means in the last analysis, the border-line between God and man, the Creator and the creature. It makes no difference whether this is done in Rome or in Geneva, in the Augustinian identification of the Church on earth with the Kingdom of God, or in the chiliastic endeavours of certain forms of modern Ecumenism to make this world the Kingdom of God or at least to make visible in a fellowship of the various churches the *Una Sancta* which is the body of Christ, or whether a small body of Christians claims to be and to act as the body of Christ.

Serious warnings against the identification of the Church with Christ — it cannot be justified from passages like 1 Cor. 12:12 or Acts 9:5 — have been made by Roman Catholic theologians. They have raised objections against *defining*, not only describing, the Church as the body of Christ.⁽³⁾ The situation has, however, completely changed since the encyclical "*Mystici Corporis Christi*" of 1943. Though an encyclical is not a decision *ex cathedra* and, consequently its doctrinal statements must not be regarded as dogma, this important document indicates in what direction the coming dogma *de ecclesia* is being developed. It gives an elaborate doctrine of the Church, but it does not say one word on the Church as the people of God, the original meaning of the word *ecclesia* which so strongly emphasised in the New Testament, also by Paul, and is the meaning in which Jesus Himself has used the word in the fundamental passage Math. 16:18. This is a deliberate omission, a well considered abandonment of the old ecclesiological tradition which the *Catechismus Romanus* still shared with the confessions of the Reformation. Since the theologians of Pius XII must have had in mind the scheme of 1870 and the criticism it met with, "*Mystici Corporis*" may be regarded as the pattern of what will be put before the Second Vatican Council. We cannot discuss here the highly important encyclical which presents a full doctrine of the Church under various aspects of the idea of the body of Christ: the Church a Body, the Church the Body of Christ, the Church the Mystical Body. This part I is followed by a second part, "The Union of the Faithful in and with Christ," and by practical conclusions. This document should be studied by all those who want to understand the decisions to be made by the Council on the dogma of the Church. But it should also be studied as a challenge to us. That the Church as body of Christ is a visible social organism is taught today by many Protestants. Is this really the understanding of Paul to whom one single local church can be the Body of Christ, as in the entire New Testament two or three assembled in the name of Jesus can be *the* Church of Christ, just as well as all local churches and the whole "brotherhood" is *the* Church of Christ. Does not the term "body of *Christ*" indicate that the Church can never be understood as a social organism. Is it allowable to conclude from the word body that the Church of Christ *must* be visible? Could it not be that the mystical body of Christ is hidden in, with

3. Details are given by Koster op. cit., see especially his protest against the identification p. 104.

and under the earthly society which we see, just as the sacramental body of Christ is hidden in, with and under the species of bread? If we address these and similar questions to our "separated brethren" in the Roman Church, we must direct them also to ourselves. There is so much talk, well meant, but at the same time confused talk, on the Church as the body of Christ that we must first clarify our own thoughts before we can enter a discussion with others. Catholic theologians have been aware, as we have seen, of the danger of identifying Christ and the Church, Christ and ourselves. Even Pius XII was aware of this danger when he rejected the idea that "the divine Redeemer and the members of the Church are united to form one physical person" and when he reminds of the "statement of the Apostle of the Nations, who, though he combines Christ and His mystical Body in a marvellous union, yet contrasts the one with the other, as Bridegroom with Bride." We must ask whether this error is confined to some extravagant representatives of the Liturgical Movement whom the pope had in mind, or whether it does not underlie the whole idea that the Church is Christ, living on in the world, which the encyclical emphasises so strongly. But this question we must also first ask ourselves. Do we really believe that the church body to which we belong is the continuation of the Incarnation? Can we really with Möhler apply the Christological doctrine of the two natures of Christ to the Church? Is it really so, as "Mystici Corporis" maintains, that, when the Church prays the Lord's Prayer, she prays not for herself, but in the name of "some of her members" who are "sick and wounded in their sins": "Forgive us our trespasses" (English Translation par. 65). Of course, if the Church is Christ, then it is sinless and does not need to repent. The visible Church is Christ, then it is not only infallible, but also holy in the sense of "sinless" and need not to repent. In the New Testament the Lord calls also His Church to repentance, as Rev. 2 and 3 shows where the *seven* churches represent the *whole* church. Or have we no longer an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches?

7.

Who are the members of the Church as the mystical body of Christ? According to the scheme of 1870 all baptised Christians who are in unity and communion with the Church, though they may be sinners. The idea that the true Church is invisible or hidden (*latens* i.e., what the Lutheran doctrine calls *ecclesia abscondita*) is rejected. Christian bodies which are not in communion with the

Church can not be called parts or members of the Church which is Christ's body. To belong to this Church is necessary to salvation, though they who suffer from invincible ignorance concerning Christ and His Church should not be eternally condemned on account of this ignorance because this does not make them guilty in the sight of God who wills all men to be saved and denies not His grace to him who does what he can do with his powers (*facienti quod in se est*). "But no one can attain eternal life who is culpably separated (*culpabiliter sejunctus*) from the unity of the Faith or the communion of the Church." Pius XII in "Mystici Corporis," had to maintain this over against theologians of the Liturgical Movement who tried to establish a closer relationship of non-Catholic Christians with the body of Christ on the basis of Baptism. "Only those are to be accounted really members of the Church who have been regenerated in the waters of Baptism and profess the true faith, and have not cut themselves off from the structure of the Body by their own unhappy act or been severed therefrom, for very grave crimes, by the legitimate authority" (21). "Schism, heresy, or apostasy are such (scil. sins) of their very nature that they sever a man from the Body of the Church, but not every sin, even the most grievous, is of such a kind . . ." (22). What, then, is the relationship of Christians living in schism or heresy with the Church? In their Baptism, if it was valid, they have become members of the body of Christ. They have received the indelible character of those who belong to Christ, as children of their heavenly Father. But as long as they are not in communion with the true Catholic Roman Church "the full use of their rights as children is impeded since they are separated visibly from her" (Cardinal Bea, quoted from "Catholic Documentation," Sydney, March, 1961). They are, as Pius XII puts it in "Mystici Corporis" (101), "those whom an unhappy breach of faith and unity has severed from us, who, however unworthily, represent on earth the person of Jesus Christ." This breach is either made by themselves — then it is a most grievous sin — or it is an unhappy inheritance. Of these the encyclical (102) says that "they may be related to the mystical Body of the Redeemer by some unconscious yearning and desire." But they are in no sense members of it. They are separated, though they may be called "separated brethren" (*fratres sejuncti*).

This term is not yet to be found in "Mystici Corporis," though it was used at that time already in apologetic and devotional literature. It has been introduced into the official terminology of the Curia, as far as we can see, in the

documents of the Council since "Ad Petri Cathedram." Here John XXIII appeals to the non-Catholics: "We address you, then, as brothers, even though you are separated from Us. For, as St. Augustine said: 'Whether they like it or not, they are our brothers. They will only cease to be our brothers when they cease to say: Our Father'." He adds another quotation from Augustine with an exhortation to love God as Father and the Church as Mother. Both passages from the "Enarrationes in psalmos" (ps. 32 and 82) written about 400 A.D. remind of very similar words written some twenty years earlier by Optatus of Mileve in the fourth of his books "on the Schism of the Donatists" (IV, 2f.; Migne PL 11, 1049ff.). It is most touching to read how the great Fathers have wrestled with the problem of the relationship between the "*catholica communio*" (Augustine) which recognised the sacraments of the Donatists as valid, and the Donatists who regarded themselves as the true Church and denied the validity of the sacraments of what to them was the sect of the *traditores*. Optatus insisted on calling the Donatist bishop Parmenianus his brother, while this man refused to recognise the Catholic bishop of Mileve as a member of the Church. One must remember the history of the great African schism, the hostility and hatred of Donatist fanatics who went even so far as to desecrate the Catholic sacrament on the one side, and the patience and charity of the great Catholic Fathers on the other, in order to realise what the great call to never failing charity towards separated brethren means which the present pope, following the example of his predecessor, has issued time and again.

The theological problem of "separated brethren" becomes clear if one realises that this term is now used not only for schismatics, that means for Christians who according to the Roman doctrine have a valid priesthood and valid sacraments, as e.g., the "separated" churches of Eastern Orthodoxy, but also for heretics, as Anglicans, Lutherans and the various groups of Reformed Christians are for Rome. How is that possible? Could the pope call Luther, Calvin, Cranmer and all the rest who came under the Anathema of the Roman Church in the 16th century his separated brethren? Obviously not. For these heretics or heresiarchs have, according to the Roman view, wilfully and culpably destroyed the unity of the Church by refusing to obey the Vicar of Christ. Others have only inherited the heresy. They are the separated brethren who are called back to the Church whose members they were at the moment of their baptism. But what about those who have not only inherited a certain doctrine, but have made it

their own on the basis of a thorough study of Holy Scripture? If they, though knowing and historically understanding the claims of Rome, take their stand with the Reformation on the authority of the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ and His apostles, is it possible to dissociate them from the Reformers whose decision against the papacy they are repeating. Against whom is the acclamation directed with which the last session of the Council of Trent on 4th December, 1563, came to an end when the Cardinal of Lorraine spoke the solemn "Anathema to all heretics," and the members of the Council responded unanimously, "Anathema, Anathema"? It is directed against us who confess today the *Sola fide* and the *Sola scriptura* which were condemned by that Council. So the differentiation between heretics and conscious heretics and unfortunate Christians who have inherited a heresy collapses. This is probably true also of the distinction between "heresy" and "schism." Donatism is by the Augsburg Confession rightly condemned as a heresy, and one has only to ask whether or not the schism between Rome and the East which originally was not caused by doctrinal differences has developed in the course of a thousand years into a split where on either side grave doctrinal issues are at stake. If the Filioque is not regarded as such, it should not be overlooked that the Eastern Orthodox Church has not accepted, and cannot accept, the dogmas of Trent — e.g., the condemnation of Pelagianism — and the Vatican, and the Mariological dogmas of 1854 and 1950. He who denies these doctrines, as e.g., the Vatican dogma on the papacy, is for Rome a heretic, not only a schismatic.

8.

The Second Council of the Vatican, whether it can meet according to schedule or must be postponed, will be an historic event of the first magnitude. Christianity is facing its greatest crisis since the fall of the Roman Empire and the victory of the crescent over the Cross in the Orient. It is losing more and more of its historic strongholds and is becoming the religion of a shrinking minority in a rapidly growing population of the earth. It may well be that the churches in most parts of the world will exist, as the churches in the Mohammedan world have existed for many centuries, in poverty and distress, in a state of oppression and persecution. We Christians of the West have always looked upon the history of the Church as a history of advancement and victory. The cross had become to the West since the day of Constantine the sign

of victory: *In hoc signo vinces*. Our history was accompanied by the battle-hymns of a victorious army from the *Vexilla regis prodeunt* of the 6th century to the hymns of the missionary movements of the last century. Now we all have to learn what the second line of that old Latin hymn implies, "*Fulget crucis mysterium*." Even our optimistic American friends begin to realise the mystery of the cross, the real cross which the Church of the Crucified must bear in this world in following Christ. Luther was right when he always emphasised the holy cross as a mark of the true Church. If one compares the atmosphere of the First Vatican Council with the atmosphere in which the Second Vaticanum is prepared the difference is striking. The "spectre" of Communism was "haunting Europe" already when Pius IX condemned it in the "Syllabus" of 1864 along with other "pests," such as secret societies and Bible societies (Denz. 1718). A few months after the adjournment of the council one of the leaders of the minority, Archbishop Darboy of Paris, became a victim of the first small Communist revolution in Europe. He died as a martyr, blessing his murderers. What the situation today is becomes clear if one thinks of the destiny of the strongholds of Roman Catholicism in Eastern Europe, the churches of the Lithuanians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Croats, of the weakness of French and Italian Catholicism, of the unsoluble problems of Latin America where one third of all Roman Catholics are supposed to live, of the tragedy in China and the problems faced by Rome in all Asia and Africa. One must keep this external situation in mind in order to understand the spiritual background of the plans made for the new council. "We are reminded of Our many Brethren in the episcopate and of Our dear priests and faithful people, who have been driven into exile or are detained in prisons and concentration camps for refusing to desert their episcopal and priestly duties, or to defect from the Catholic faith," says John XXIII in "Ad Petri Cathedram" (90) and he adds, while pleading for "that lawful freedom to which everyone — God's Church included — has a right": "We have no desire to offend anyone. On the contrary, We freely pardon all and pray God for their pardon" (91). It is at a time when confessors arise and martyrs die in all parts of Christendom irrespective of their denominational affiliation, that Rome pleads for unity. She can understand unity only in terms of her understanding of the Church and the truth entrusted to the Church, as we, on the other hand, can think of church unity only as unity in what we cannot

but regard as the truth of God's Word which must not be abandoned. Our age has become aware, more than former centuries, of the tragedy of a divided Christendom. The forthcoming council will help us to realise the depth of this tragedy. It is to be expected that it will definitely destroy the dream of a "reunion" of all Christendom in a visible church. Also the American Protestants will have to learn that a united church built on compromise and "comprehensiveness" would not be the Church of Christ. For such a "church" would lose with the distinctive doctrines any doctrine. It would not be able to distinguish between truth and error, church and heresy. Even the idea underlying the present World Council of Churches that it *must* be possible to reach visible unity by bringing the churches together for common work and worship and for a serious search of the truth is bound to fail. We men of this age of conferences have a superstitious belief in discussion, as if we must come to a common understanding of the divine truth, if only we continue long enough to discuss our respective doctrines humbly, frankly, without prejudice and with the earnest prayer that the Holy Spirit may lead us into the truth. This can be so in many cases. But it can be also otherwise, and just in those points of doctrine where the deepest mysteries of God's revelation are at stake. As long as we live on this earth and in the limitations of our sinful human existence it will happen again and again that conscience stands against conscience in the most vital doctrinal decisions. Why this is so, we do not know. We must make a conscientious decision, and we can and must not act against conscience. This is one of the doctrines in which Thomas Aquinas and Luther, the Roman Church and the churches of the Reformation agree. Much can be done in the way of Christian unity: union of those who are one in the faith, practical co-operation wherever it is possible without violation of consciences, and in any case more common work, more repentance for our sins, more mutual charity, more prayer for one another, more solidarity over against a hostile world. As *separated* brethren we enter the historic period of the Second Vatican Council and the ensuing theological and ecclesiastical discussions. But even where our separation remains, we shall be separated *brethren*.

H. SASSE.

History, Exegesis and Prayer

During the past twenty-five years a great deal of biblical theology, exegesis and liturgy has been based upon the understanding of God as a God who acts in the events of saving history. This approach will continue to be used with great benefit. It is therefore important that its dangers should be noted. These dangers occur when an exegetical tool is isolated into a metaphysical principle. Historical realism may then dominate, rather than serve the text of Holy Scripture and may ignore the simplicity or the fullness of the faith of the Church. The purpose of this article is to indicate the existence of historical realism first by exposition and secondly by contrast with Origen's understanding of history, exegesis and prayer. The account of Origen is not exhaustive, but does illuminate the contemporary problem with which this article is concerned.

1. *Historical realism has a clear conceptual framework.*

(a) God is a God who acts in history. The events of this world are God's revelation and God's sphere of activity. The important thing about events is not any universal truth which they might express but their particularity. Three different examples of historical realism will indicate the nature of its conceptual framework.

A classic presentation is found in C. H. Dodd's *The Bible Today*. Its dangers have been indicated by Bultmann. Here there are concepts which belong to a philosophy of history, rather than to a theology which sees all history as subordinate to a decisive eschatological event.⁽¹⁾ The church is the fulfilment or climax of an historical development.⁽²⁾ The historical achievements of the church are a proof of this fulfilment. But, criticises Bultmann, in the New Testament the church does not belong to the world but to the end, and the place of Christ within the line of prophets requires clarification. How far, Bultmann continues, can the encounter with the Risen Christ be called a "public fact?" Yet the encounter with the Word of God is placed by Dodd in the realm of historical phenomena. Dodd writes further, "The principle of 'particularity' which we have noted as inseparable from a revelation in history, has thus worked itself out to its logical conclusion. The ultimate Locus of revelation is neither nation nor community, but a Person, who lived in Palestine and 'suffered under Pontius Pilate'.⁽³⁾ But to speak of a revelation of God which a historian may perceive, says Bultmann, is possible only to the fundamentalist or to one who has turned the revelation into an idea for the interpretation of history.⁽⁴⁾ As the body of Christ, Bultmann continues, the church has no history at all. It is an eschatological phenomenon.⁽⁵⁾

A different example of historical realism is found in the preface to a more recent work.⁽⁶⁾ New Testament theology is described as "the framing of an hypothesis concerning the content and character of the faith of the apostolic Church and the testing of this hypothesis in the light of all the available techniques of New Testament scholarship, historical, critical, literary, philological, archaeological, and so on."⁽⁷⁾ Like the scientist the theologian gets a "hunch," forms an hypothesis and tries to verify it. The procedures are the same. Everyone has a New Testament theology.⁽⁸⁾ Such a theology cannot be proved right but its hypotheses can be proved better than others if they give coherence to a greater number of facts. However good such a theology may be, it can never be final because Christianity is an historical faith and no two generations look at history in the same way. All criteria mentioned for testing hypotheses are literary or historical. The hypothesis favoured ("that Jesus himself is the author of the brilliant reinterpretation of the Old Testament scheme of salvation") is favoured because it makes better sense or better history.⁽⁹⁾ Prior to all other beliefs is the belief that there is such a thing as history and that history has a coherent pattern. This belief determines that the procedure of the theologian should consist in looking for good history. It also determines the result of the procedure. A theology cannot be true or false, because a human science cannot "investigate God or his action in history,"⁽¹⁰⁾ and its only techniques are historical. A theology cannot be permanently better than another, because "each hypothesis must be stated afresh in each new age of history."⁽¹¹⁾

A third account is more elaborate.⁽¹²⁾ Reinhold Niebuhr has two main approaches to the subject of history. Using the first approach, he maintains that there is no pattern in history except that which can be seen by the eye of faith. No rationalistic scheme will make coherent what is chaotic. Only Christian faith can do this. What faith sees is an historical order. "The Christian faith begins with and is founded upon, the affirmation that the life, death and resurrection of Christ represent an event in and through which a disclosure of the whole meaning of history occurs."⁽¹³⁾ Christianity is concerned with a revelatory event not with a rationalistic idea or a mystical experience.⁽¹⁴⁾

Using the second approach, Niebuhr maintains that there are clues to history. Other events beside the Christ event may also reveal. There are moments in which, "a whole course of history is fulfilled. In them the seeming chaos of the past achieves its meaning; and the partial and particular aspects of life are illumined to become parts of a

complete whole.”⁽¹⁵⁾ Symbolic meaning may be found in any event, person or idea. In this way Niebuhr treats a drummer and two nuns, an every member canvass and the cross of Christ. There are polarities in history which give it a structure.⁽¹⁶⁾ It has been said that, “If history has only ‘tangents’ of meaning and of coherence, then Reinhold Niebuhr must have enough tangents to surround the circumference and to penetrate to the centre of history.”⁽¹⁷⁾ As a Socialist Niebuhr once claimed that the workers were “destined to become the rulers of society,”⁽¹⁸⁾ and “fated to contend for a society which the logic of history affirms.”⁽¹⁹⁾ When Niebuhr abandoned this inexorable logic of history, he certainly did not think that history had no structure. He considered that it was governed by a moral law rather than by the law enunciated by Marx.

It would seem that both where he claims to move by faith and where he moves as a scientist, there is a basic philosophy of history in his thinking. What faith sees is an historical order. What empirical verification finds is also an historical order. “For one thing, the valuable insights and principles which Niebuhr allegedly got from beyond history seem to me quite plainly to have been found in history. Where else, indeed, would he find them? It is possible for instance, to take a whole series of propositions in his philosophy of history and to indicate their empirical origins and verification.”⁽²⁰⁾ In his intellectual autobiography Niebuhr says, “It is difficult to know whether the criticism of both liberal and Marxist views of human nature and history was prompted by a profounder understanding of the Biblical faith; or whether this understanding was prompted by the tragic facts of contemporary history.”⁽²¹⁾

Dodd, Richardson and Niebuhr give an indication of the historical realism which is the most prevalent conceptual framework among Christians today. The affinities of this scheme with Marxism are apparent as are also its antagonisms.

It is not possible to point to a particular school of secular philosophy where these ideas have been emphasised. Much of this emphasis has been by way of protest and not by way of formulation. The importance of the particular is found in Kierkegaard and also in Mill and the later British empiricists. History gained new significance in the works of Marx, who reacted from Hegelian idealism in a different way from Kierkegaard. The pragmatism of William James had considerable influence on theologians. Bergson, Whitehead and Alexander gave their various accounts of the living continuum. William Temple put for-

ward an historical realism or dialectical realism which has been far more influential than has been recognised. "It is in history that the ultimate meaning of human existence is both revealed and actualised."⁽²²⁾ "I believe that the Dialectical Materialism of Marx, Engels and Lenin has so strong an appeal to the minds of many of our contemporaries, and has so strong a foundation in contemporary experience, that only a Dialectic more comprehensive in its range of apprehension and more thorough in its appreciation of the interplay of factors in the real world, can overthrow it or seriously modify it as a guide to action."⁽²³⁾

(b) Origen does not deny the literal sense of Scripture nor the validity of history (*manente prius historiae veritate*)⁽²⁴⁾; but as a Christian preacher he interprets what is past in terms of his faith in Christ and participates in the tradition which is not merely the transmission of the letter but communion in the Spirit.⁽²⁵⁾ The inner mysteries of spiritual doctrine are concerned with present realities; *hodie, etiam hodie*.⁽²⁶⁾ To understand the Law spiritually is to pass from the Old Testament to the New Testament which is forever new, and to enter the mystery of Christ crucified and the mystery of the Church.⁽²⁷⁾ The spiritual life to which the which the Scriptures guide is a life of conflict for the soldier of Christ,⁽²⁸⁾ a journey of many stages to the land of promise, and a union of love with the bridegroom Christ.⁽²⁹⁾ The four Gospels were written with both a spiritual and a corporeal sense. They are primarily concerned not with past physical events but with present spiritual realities. They point to the eternal Gospel, to the Parousia when those who have lived spiritually on earth according to the laws of the first Gospel, "will live in the kingdom of heaven according to the laws of this eternal Gospel."⁽³⁰⁾ Christ is present but as one who never ceases to come.⁽³¹⁾

History remains the starting point from which we ascend to the splendour of the mystery.⁽³²⁾ God's dealings with man are a *sugkatabasis oikonomia pronoia paideusis*. We go from the darkness to the light, from the many pearls to the one unique pearl.⁽³³⁾ But the prophets contemplated in advance the glory of Christ and must not be rejected, though Israel did not become the Church by a gradual or natural development. "Jesus Christ in coming gave us the Gospel for the Law, and at once the Law of Moses appeared spiritual to our eyes."⁽³⁴⁾ All things are created new through Christ. In *vestustate litterae*—in *novitate spiritus*.⁽³⁵⁾ Like the Temple, the historical form of the Old Testament must be destroyed.⁽³⁶⁾ Christ unites the two Testaments.⁽³⁷⁾ "They saw Jesus alone." Law and prophets

come together in him.⁽³⁸⁾ The spiritual realities to which the Old and New Testaments point are neither Platonic forms nor Gnostic aeons. They depend upon the Cross and resurrection of Jesus. They are the kingdom of the heavens which is contained within the King himself *autobasileia*. Into this we enter through the crucified and risen Lord.⁽³⁹⁾

2. *The conceptual framework of historical realism influences the exegesis of Scripture.*

(a) Much contemporary exegesis may be epitomised by the words of Cullman in the Foreword to his recent book: *die bewährte philologisch — historische (Methode)*. This is for him the proper method of exegesis and other methods do not carry the same authority.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Here as above,⁽⁴¹⁾ history has both the initial meaning of concern for facts rather than ideas, and the deeper meaning of history of salvation. The particular circumstances of the text (when it was spoken and by whom) are of importance because they fix the position of the event on the line of saving history and because they express the particularity which is its other claim to truth. Each verse has meaning as it is related to the pattern of the history of man's salvation, which history is the subject of the Bible. What happened then must be related to what happens now. The symbol of the line covers the difficulty of this relation. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever," is the basic Christological text.⁽⁴²⁾ The history of salvation is anchored by certain events in Palestine.⁽⁴³⁾ All Christology is history of salvation and all history of salvation is Christology.⁽⁴⁴⁾ An idealist would concentrate on the meaning of "Jesus Christ, the same" and find difficulty in unifying the ideas of the person of Christ found in the New Testament. The realism of which we have been thinking concentrates on "yesterday, today, forever" and is able to unify on the basis of continuity in time.⁽⁴⁵⁾

The historical element is brought out most clearly in the contrast between typology and allegory. The distinction has been recognised but it has not been regarded as important until modern times.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Apart from the background of historical realism, it is not easy to attach any great significance to the difference.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Typology depends on sequence in time. One event must prefigure another event. Allegory does not require any sequence in time nor any event. It simply entails that one thing should be reflected or concealed in another.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Typology depends upon the image of the straight line. Allegory depends upon the image of the veil. But the distinction is still a questionable one.⁽⁴⁹⁾ What makes the first event the type of the second event if it does not to some extent show it in veiled fashion?

Again, how important is sequence in time now that the revelation in Christ has come? Origen was driven to make the first coming of Christ the shadow of what was to come in the future; but it is wrong to suggest that the fullness of Christ has not come, or that the second coming is to the first as the Law is to the Gospel. There is a most important sense in which typology must give way to allegory if the Kingdom is here.⁽⁵⁰⁾

The semantic theory is the simple one that theological and biblical words behave like other words but are set in a different order. Words describe what we want them to describe in a simple relation of correspondence. But religious language does not behave in a simple representative manner as does a lot of everyday language about cheese and bread. Theological word-books can be misused to give to the whole message of the Bible a false mechanical simplicity. Something of the ambivalence of religious language can be seen in the tension which is placed upon a word in the context of a joke. The word which is capable of different meanings is placed as it were in a state of tension between them. The passion for explaining words is not a good basis for theology unless it makes clear the presence of the inexplicable in each term. Jean Anouilh speaks of the passion for explanation which has come from a false political and scientific outlook. Concerning his play, "The Lark," he says, "How it was written I simply do not know." Religious language is, within limits, similar to the language of poetry.⁽⁵¹⁾ A literary historian⁽⁵²⁾ has said, "If poetry does not (for both poet and the reader) smash through the walls of the imprisoning universe of self and give entrance into new countries — whether beautiful or terrifying — poetry might as well not be written. Nothing is so disturbing in poetry as the quality of incomprehensibility; but it is doubtful whether any poet of the first rank has entirely avoided or desired to avoid this quality."

It has been shown recently that it is not possible to reduce the language of the Bible to scientific or historical language which is straightforward and public.⁽⁵³⁾ The situations which the Bible describes are "odd" or "existential."⁽⁵⁴⁾ A logical approach is more useful than a scientific or literary approach.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Such an approach however is more useful when it finds no logical bridge between Old Testament language and New Testament facts,⁽⁵⁶⁾ than when it explains the Ascension with "empirical parallels well known to us in our experience."⁽⁵⁷⁾ Useful as this treatment is it sometimes appears to be a more sophisticated attempt to reduce the language of the Bible to

straightforward public language. There is a difference between saying that miracles indicate the presence of the kingdom of God and saying that they are cases in which "the universe came alive in a way which displayed personal concern."⁽⁵⁸⁾

(b) For Origen the exegesis of holy scripture includes the recognition that words have more than one meaning. The direct and obvious meaning is not important because it refers to the world of things and events. God cannot be described in this way and it is blasphemous to attempt to so describe Him. The physical meaning of the words is here an offence which must be overcome. The words of the Bible as they appear frequently do not make decent sense. This offence is for the express purpose of making it impossible for us to stop at this stage of interpretation. We must go on to the spiritual meaning. The fourth book of the *De Principiis* is devoted to a discussion of the inspiration of the scriptures. The scriptures are inspired and should therefore be interpreted spiritually. Their international influence, supra-human power, fulfilled predictions and divine subject show them to be inspired. Their spiritual nature has been evident since the advent of Christ. They can now be seen to be divine by those who read them carefully, for the veil has been taken away. Like creation, they have their uneven patches, but the wisdom which they show forth is not human but perfect and divine. How are the scriptures to be interpreted? The Jews and the Gnostics are equally wrong because they interpret literally and cannot therefore see the fulfilment of the Old in the New. Those who hold the rule of the apostolic and heavenly church of Jesus Christ believe that scripture contains mystical economies, mysteries, types, prophecies, enigmas and obscurities from which the lawyers have removed the key. The scriptures show that they should be understood as body, soul and spirit, body being the literal and corporeal aspect of the scripture and soul and spirit being what is beyond the letter and is spiritual. The physical things of the law were examples and shadows of future spiritual blessings. They were patterns of Christ. One understands the scripture therefore when one receives in it from the Spirit unspeakable mysteries concerning men (who are souls in bodies) and concerning God and his only Son. One looks beyond the stumbling blocks to the spiritual connections of things that happened and of things which were included for their mystical meaning although they did not happen. For the Spirit has so worked in law, prophets and Gospel that we should not look to the letter alone. There

is more literal truth than literal untruth in the scriptures. We search the scriptures to find that meaning which is scattered through them, which is the whole meaning and which connects literal impossibilities with spiritual truths. The book of the people of Israel tells of two laws, two advents and an everlasting Gospel. Its glory is not in words but in inner meaning.⁽⁵⁹⁾ "AD quam regulam etiam divinarum litterarum intelligentia retinenda est, quo scilicet ea quae dicuntur, non pro vilitate sermonis, sed pro divinitate sancti Spiritus qui eas conscribi inspiravit, censeantur."⁽⁶⁰⁾ Origen returns to the point from which he started. The scriptures are to be interpreted spiritually because they are the work of the Holy Spirit.

To understand the Bible we must consider spiritually what was written by the Spirit.⁽⁶¹⁾ Because the Spirit unites the whole of the Scripture into one book⁽⁶²⁾ we relate its various parts when we interpret.⁽⁶³⁾ The Spirit inspires on two occasions, when scripture was written and when scripture is read.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Yet even with the aid of the Spirit man can only touch the surface, for the Spirit alone searches all things, the deep things of God.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Origen does not consider his own exegeses to be a real understanding of Scripture. They are only intelligentiae spiritualis exercitia.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Only God can speak of God and only He can understand his word.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Transeunda sunt omnia. In another life we shall fully contemplate the truth of Scripture not in any impersonal way, but in a dialogue between the soul and God.⁽⁶⁸⁾ There is one Word of God who dwells within Scripture, the soul and the universe. To understand scripture or the universe, one has but to come to Jesus.⁽⁶⁹⁾ He meets us in scripture and in the Eucharist. He unites us in his Church.⁽⁷⁰⁾

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(To be concluded)

1. Bultmann, "The Bible Today und die Eschatologie" p.402 ff in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, 1956.
2. But, says Bultmann, the church is "eine eschatologische Grosse in dem radikalen Sinne." p.404, op.cit.
3. *The Bible Today*, p.109.
4. "The Bible Today und die Eschatologie" p.407 op.cit.
5. *ibid.* p.408. Apart from "The Bible Today," there are admirable expositions in *History and the Gospel* especially chapters I and V.
6. *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament*, by A. Richardson, 1958.
7. *ibid.* p.9.
8. Richardson, op.cit. p.10. "We must have some notion at the back of our minds about the meaning of the New Testament as a whole." The same argument was used by A. E. Taylor, p.5 *Elements of Metaphysics*, 1909. We have really no choice whether we shall do so consciously and in accord with some intelligible principle, or unconsciously and at random."
9. Richardson, op.cit., p.12.
10. *ibid.* p.11.
11. p.12.
12. In fact so elaborate that some kind of summary has only been possible with the assistance of an article, "Reinhold Niebuhr's Philosophy of History" by Robert E. Fitch in *Reinhold Niebuhr*.
13. *Faith and History*, p.26, cited p.294, *Reinhold Niebuhr*, 1956.

14. cf Niebuhr's statement on p.18 "the Christian affirmation that the mystery of the divine has been disclosed and transmuted into meaning by historical revelation." Reinhold Niebuhr, p.18.
15. p.96 Discerning the Signs of the Times; quoted Fitch op.cit., p.297.
16. Fitch op.cit., p.289. 17. *ibid.* p.300.
18. p.148 Reflections on the End of an Era, quoted Fitch op.cit. p.301.
19. *ibid.*, p.143, quoted Fitch op.cit. p.301.
20. Fitch op.cit. p.306. 21. Reinhold Niebuhr, p.9.
22. Christian News Letter, 1944. 23. Nature, Man and God, p.9.
24. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit*, p.94. Gal (1297A). cf. also Num., h.21.I.
25. *ibid.* chap. 3. 26. *ibid.* p.149. 27. p.177.
28. "Post hoc iam ingrediendum nobis est et ad interiora certaminis." Hom. Ex. 4.9. quoted de Lubac, p.185.
29. *ibid.* chap. 4.
30. De Princ. IV.3; quoted de Lubac p.227.
31. Ser. Matt. 54; quoted de Lubac p.230.
32. Hom. Num. 5.1; de Lubac p.246.
33. Matt. 10. 9-10; de Lubac p.258.
34. Ps. 118, 102; de Lubac p.268.
35. Rom. 6.6; p.271.
36. Ser. Matt. 31; de Lubac p.273.
37. Matt. 17.12; p.275.
38. Matt. 12.43; p.277.
39. John 10, 18; de Lubac p.294.
40. Die Christologie des Neuen Testaments, pp V and VI.
41. Section 1 b.
42. Cullmann op.cit. p.9 cf. also Christ and Time (E.T.) p.6.
43. Cullmann op.cit. p.332. 44. *ibid.* p.336.
45. Bultmann has brought out some of the weaknesses of this approach.
46. de Lubac, *Recherches de science religieuse*, 1947 p.180 ff. cf. Danielou, *Origene*, p.175.
47. Those who do not hold the position of historical realism do not seem to be more impressed by typology than by allegory. e.g. *Religious Language*, Ramsey, p.122.
48. cf. *Essays on Typology*, Lampe and Woolcombe, p.40 and p.75. cf. also *Allegory and Event*, Hanson, p.7 and J. Danielou, *The New Testament and the Theology of History. Studia Evangelica*.
49. Note the difficulty of speaking about "allegorism firmly anchored to history" and of "symbolic" typology in Philo. *Essays on Typology*, p.56 and p'65.
50. cf. Origen—the spiritual sense is the result of the coming of Christ. The liturgical use of allegory was particularly appropriate. Sagnard: *Holy Scripture in the Early Fathers of the Church, Studia Evangelica*, p.109.
51. The problems associated with this assertion have been set out by R. W. Hepburn in an essay "Poetry and Religious Belief" in *Metaphysical Beliefs* by Toulmin, Hepburn and Macintyre.
52. A. C. Ward, *Twentieth Century Literature*, ninth edition 1945. p.189.
53. In the illuminating study, *Religious Language*, by I. T. Ramsey.
54. Ramsey, op.cit. p.106. 55. *ibid.* p.122. 56. *ibid.* p.121.
57. *ibid.* p.137. 58. *ibid.* p.147.
59. Omnis gloria regis intrinsecus est. De Princ. IV.26. Ps. XLIV, 14.
60. De Princ. IV.27.
61. Hom. Num. XVI.9; de Lubac p.297.
62. De Princ. I.3; John 5.6-8 and elsewhere; de Lubac p.301-2.
63. Hom. Jos. 15.3; Hom. Ex. I.2; de Lubac p.309.
64. John 32.18; John 20.44; and elsewhere; de Lubac p.315.
65. De Princ. II.9.
66. Rom. 9.1; de Lubac p.325.
67. Matt. 17.13; de Lubac p.330.
68. cf. Hom. Is. 6, 3; de Lubac pp.333-4.
69. John 32.19; Hom. Luc. 32, Rom. 6.11; Matt. 16.8; Hom. Jos. 7.2. de Lubac p.355.
70. Ser. Matt. 79; de Lubac p.372.

Book Reviews

GREEK INFLUENCE IN JEWISH ESCHATOLOGY

By T. Francis Glasson (S.P.C.K., London), 1961, pp. 89; 9/6.

The first of the S.P.C.K.'s new series of Biblical monographs sets a novel standard of disarming persuasion. Questions of 'influence,' being by their nature beyond resolution, are often attacked with all the more dogmatism. Mr. Glasson uses the opposite approach. He insists that he is not discussing the originality or the self-consistency of Jewish ideas, but merely points at which their expression may have been affected by that of similar ideas among the Greeks. He anticipates his critics by carefully noting where his parallels break down; he does not attempt to rule the protagonists of Persian influence out of court; and he does not even claim to be discovering many of his parallels for the first time. Yet this very modesty attracts consent, and his main contention, that there may have been a great deal more Greek influence than has been supposed, seems self-evident in his brief but lucid exposition.

At no fewer than ten important points Mr. Glasson is able to cite Greek parallels that are more exact than the Persian ones. The major cases need only be stated to commend themselves. Hesiod's four metallic ages correspond to Daniel's. Enoch 1-36 is a Jewish *nekkyia*. The divisions of Sheol are parallel to those elaborated in Orphic thought. Reincarnation is much closer to resurrection than Greek ideas of immortality are usually thought to be, and Plato in the *Politicus* actually envisages the divine age beginning with a resurrection. Essenes resemble Pythagoreans in some respects. Demons, fallen angels, and angelic rulers present many similarities in either literature. The destruction of the world by both flood and fire is a commonplace with both Stoics and Jews. All these and a number of other ideas are clearly illustrated by citations, in the case of the Greeks, frequently from Hesiod and Plato.

The literary comparisons are introduced by an historical argument the importance of which merits much more attention than the author spared it. The only point of close contact between Persians and Jews was at the time of the liberation of Babylon in 538. Yet Cyrus was not apparently a Zoroastrian. In any case the literature that displays the new ideas in Jewish eschatology belongs well into the Hellenistic period. This argument might be amplified by a study of the contrast between the cultural liberalism of the Achaemenids and the heavy conformist pressures of the Seleucid era.

Mr. Glasson has, to say the least, thrown wide open the old issue of the origins of Jewish eschatology. Two obvious lines for further enquiry are the possible channels of communication for Persian beliefs, and the distribution of Greek and particularly Orphic literature among the Jews. And what of the famous hostility of the Jews to Hellenism? How are reaction and assimilation to be reconciled?

E. A. JUDGE.

THE ATONEMENT AND THE SACRAMENTS

By Robert S. Paul (Hodder & Stoughton, London), 1961, pp. 396; 44/6 (Aust.)

Formerly a Congregationalist minister in England and now a professor at Hartford Theological Seminary, Connecticut, the author in his Introduction defines the primary meaning of "atonement" as reconciliation with the secondary meaning of satisfaction which has received a stronger accent in America than in Britain.

In Part I, "The Legacy of the Ancient World," there is discussed the movement of Christian thought from the Fathers to the Puritans, the influence of contemporary images upon the various theories being indicated—the Hebrew cultus and sacrifice, slavery and ransom,

feudalism and satisfaction, the national state (with impersonal justice) and the penal theory, international law and the rectoral interpretation. Dr. Paul corrects Aulen in maintaining that whilst the victorious motif is the most important, nevertheless the penal theory is strikingly present in Luther. With Calvin, who had a decisive subsequent influence, the penal interpretation is clearly dominant although not to the exclusion of other aspects, but with Owen and the Puritans that interpretation was the only element with the consequent danger of tritheism which by reaction through Arianism opened the way to Unitarianism in the churches of Calvinism. In Part II, "Disputes about the Inheritance," there is a valuable discussion of the past 100 years when there was perhaps the most concentrated attempt to rethink the doctrine in Christian history, Anglo-Saxon, and particularly British theology, giving special attention to the Atonement as governing doctrine and apologetic. In the earlier part of the period, beginning with the appearance of McLeod Campbell's significant book, the dominant movement, influenced by nineteenth century individualism, was from the objective to the subjective, although there is failure on Paul's part to clearly distinguish McLeod Campbell's conception of moral satisfaction as terminating immediately on God from the moral influence theory, whereby "historical objectivity became the means whereby Christian faith was placed on a basis of pure subjectivity" (p. 170). Appreciative consideration is given to Dale, Denney and Forsyth with their contrasted emphasis on the Atonement as an objective action by God Himself. More recently, with a growing ecumenical consciousness, in such writers as Vincent Taylor, the tendency has been, with some stress on sacrificial categories, to find a synthesis, the various images and theories being required to supplement and correct each other.

The work of theology, however, is not only to select but to recast. "Other doctrines may be given classical expression by the Church, but if the doctrine of the atonement is the point where theology becomes apologetic the form in which it is expressed can never be fixed. The fact of the atonement is unalterable, but the images must always remain flexible . . . in order to present the scandal of the Cross to each succeeding age in its sharpest form" (p. 305). When it comes to stating his own position Paul adopts the defective Ritschlian approach that revelation is given in acts rather than words and, further, suggests that the dramatic action of Christian worship, uniquely the Dominical Sacraments as the extension of the Atonement, are the indispensable commentary on God's action in Christ. Thus Part III, "Treasure in Earthen Vessels," with its exposition of the Sacraments is really more in the nature of an appendage than a climax to the book. The discussion along Forsythian lines is interesting and suggestive although it contains the fantastic proposal that, to convey the meaning of both prevenient grace and individual faith, the Sacrament of Baptism "include the 'baptism' of infants followed by confirmation of believers by immersion . . . as constituting one act, *one sacrament in time*, the Sacrament of Baptism by water and the Spirit" (p. 357).

Frequently Paul asserts that "there is no one theory that can claim to be the orthodox and catholic doctrine" (p. 87). It is of course true that "since the time of the great councils there has been no universally accepted vehicle by which such universal acceptance of a single theory could be imposed" (p. 306). Nevertheless, the Anselmic concept of 'satisfactio,' adhered to with marginal variations in both the Decrees of Trent and the Reformation Confessions (and The Longer Catechism of the Orthodox Catholic Eastern Church), is rightly asserted by Brunner to constitute "the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Atonement." (*The Mediator*, p. 470). In this learned and stimulating book, the author, whilst fully recognising the importance of the sub-

jective ethical aspect, leaves no doubt as to the centrality of the objective 'doneness' of God's act in Christ, but he fails to perceive that true objectivity as theocentric is only effectively expressed in the Catholic concept of 'satisfactio' which finds continuous expression in varied forms.

It is erroneously stated that Benjamin B. Warfield was "the president of Princeton Theological Seminary" (p. 91), that John Owen "was a member of the Westminster Assembly" (p. 117), the Shorter Catechism of which body is strangely described a number of times as "the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession" (pp. 109, 113, 396).

R. SWANTON.

SPECIAL REVELATION AND THE WORD OF GOD

By Bernard Ramm (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids), 1961, pp. 220; \$4.00.

The author, who is Professor of Systematic Theology in the California Baptist Theological Seminary, gives us here a rather comprehensive, though certainly not exhaustive, essay on the contemporary problem of revelation. As he admits in the preface, he is strongly influenced by Dutch Reformed Theology, especially by the writings of Dr. Abraham Kuyper and Prof. G. C. Berkouwer. The work itself abounds with quotations from and references to Dutch Reformed authors. The present reviewer, who himself was trained in this tradition, was pleased to note this(!) He believes that there are still many valuable insights hidden in Dutch Reformed Theology, insights which could be very stimulating for contemporary discussions.

The book consists of three major parts. I, The Concept of Special Revelation. II, The Modalities of Special Revelation (subdivided in: the Modality of Divine Condescension, Divine Speaking, Historical Event, Incarnation). III, The Products of Special Revelation (subdivided in: Revelation in the Form of Language, the Knowledge of God, Scripture, Translation).

Personally we were particularly captivated by the discussion of the Modalities. Precisely at this point the student of the Bible is confronted with many problems, and they can only be solved when these modalities are understood. In particular the modality of Condescension is of great importance, not only for the understanding of the Bible, but of the whole miracle of special revelation. Revelation from God's side (His is the initiative!) always means condescension. God's revelation always comes to us 'in the form of the servant.' Calvin meant this, when he spoke of the 'accommodatio Dei' and likewise Luther, when he spoke of the 'larva Dei.' Unfortunately this insight was almost completely lost in the Orthodoxy of the Post Reformation period and also in modern Fundamentalism. It was one of the merits of Kuyper and Bavinck that they emphasised this condescension very strongly. The same is true of the theology of Karl Barth, who, however, actually dissolves the idea of condescension by his contrast between the merely human witness and the merely divine act of revelation. Only when the divine and human aspect are seen as intertwined, one gets the proper view of the condescension. For that reason we think that Ramm's metaphor of the 'laminated wood' (p. 34/35) is very unsatisfactory. It is not only too mechanical, but also gives the impression of the divine revelation being added to the human witness.

It is the great merit of the author that he wants to steer clear of both fundamentalism and liberalism. In both cases the mystery of God who saves by act and word is lost sight of. In Fundamentalism the Bible is degraded to a book filled with revealed doctrines, a kind of Christian Koran, a 'gramma' instead of a 'graphe.' In Liberalism the

Bible is only a book with devout opinions and experiences. To give just one quotation: "The critic wants a notarial Bible, a Bible written by a combined historian and court-reporter . . . The fundamentalist wants a Bible that is better than the famous Cambridge historical series." In both cases there is no respect for the 'condescensio Dei.'

One of the best parts of the book is that where Dr. Ramm shows the fallacy of the current contrast between revelation as 'encounter' and 'conceptual revelation.' He rightly points out that it is very remarkable that those, who defend this contrast, write such long, 'conceptual' treatises about the act and contents of revelation!

Of course, this book does not solve all our problems. Yet it clearly shows the way we have to go in order to find a solution. As evidence of our interest we would ask some critical questions. (1) Is it correct to deal with the incarnation as the last modality? Should it not be the starting point, Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, being the centre of all revelation? (2) Is it correct to relate inspiration one-sidedly to the trustworthiness of the record? Is it not rather so that the primary function of inspiration is that it makes the Bible God's revelation to and for us? (3) Is it correct to speak of language as the first 'product' of revelation (cf. 139)? What the author says about it is quite interesting, but we think that as such language is one of the means of special revelation and therefore should only be discussed as one of the modalities of special revelation.

Without exaggeration we may say that this book is a 'must' for everyone who is interested in the problem of revelation. We are sure that both ministers and theological students will profit much by a careful reading of this book. Actually this is a book that one should read more than once, which is the greatest compliment one can pay to any book and its author!

K. RUNIA.

GEMEINDE UND GEMEINDEORDNUNG IM NEUEM TESTAMENT*

By Eduard Schweizer (Zwingli Verlag, Zürich), 1959, pp. 217; Fr. 20.

This book from the pen of the well-known Zürich University Professor deals with the Church and its organisation in the New Testament. Discussing numerous Scripture passages, referring to more than 200 authors and providing 900 footnotes, this book is a very scholarly contribution to the ecumenical discussions of our day.

The work contains two main parts, the first dealing with the "Vielgestaltigkeit," the pluriformity of the New Testament Church, the second with its unity. According to the introductory chapter (pp. 7-13) we cannot speak of "the" New Testament Church organisation: there is much variety; e.g., the Johannine epistles suggest a development which is "eine völlig andere" (one which differs completely) from that of the Pastoral epistles. Professor Schweizer does not believe in a "static" Christianity, a simple repetition of New Testament formulas and organisations. We have to find the general message of the New Testament on the subject under consideration. There follow five chapters dealing with the different conceptions of the Church's organisation in the New Testament. They are the conceptions of: a, Jesus (pp. 14-27); b, the earliest congregations: at Jerusalem, of Matthew, of Luke and of the Pastoral Epistles (pp. 28-79); c, Paul and those who are influenced by his conception: Colossians and Ephesians, 1 Peter and Hebrews (pp. 80-104); d, John and those under his influence: the epistles of John and Revelation (pp. 105-124); e, the Apostolic Fathers (pp. 125-147).

The methods of "Formgeschichte" are rigorously applied. According to the author it is difficult to ascertain the historical data, because

* English translation by Frank Clarke: *Church Order in the New Testament* (S.C.M., London), 1961, pp.239; 16/-.

Jesus' story and his words had gone through a long tradition before they found their fixation in the New Testament writings: "often we cannot state with certainty what goes back to Jesus himself, and what was gradually transformed or formulated completely anew by the Church" (p. 14, Reviewer's translation). Several sayings of Jesus, which are of the greatest importance for the subject under consideration, are judged not to be authentic, e.g., Matthew 16:18; the passages which refer to the institution of the Lord's Supper; Mark 14:27; the passages in which Jesus speaks of himself as the Messiah or as the Son of God (probably); Luke 22:32; etc., etc. (see pages 14-24). Of the Evangelists it is said that they have simply transferred certain features of the post-resurrection congregation to the circle of Jesus' disciples before the Resurrection, p. 19. Of the book of Acts, despite its rehabilitation as a trustworthy historical source since Sir W. M. Ramsay published his discoveries, footnote 162 says that it gives incorrect information and is untrustworthy as a historical source, p. 42. There is hardly any New Testament writing which is not operated on by the "form-geschichtliche" scalpel.

Little wonder that the 18 different conceptions of the Church's organisation which Professor Schweizer has discovered in the New Testament do not only vary, but time and again they contradict each other. The result of this method is that the general message of the New Testament on the subject concerned, discussed in the second part of the book, consists of what Prof. Schweizer, sitting as a critic over the Word of God, has found to be acceptable as a guide for the life of the Church today. For those who believe in the divine inspiration (inspiredness) of the New Testament in accordance with Jesus' promise in John 16:12 ff., and who therefore accept its trustworthiness, rejecting the idea of contradictory teachings in it, all this is very disappointing.

This does not imply, however, that in the opinion of this reviewer Professor Schweizer's book does not contain many elements that are of great value. On the contrary, all through the book but especially in the second part there is much that everyone will recognise as sound exegesis and valid application of the New Testament message for our day. Particularly in the chapters on "the Office" (pp. 154 ff.), "the Ordination" (pp. 187 ff.) and "the Apostolic Succession" (pp. 192 ff.), many things are said which no one should neglect to read who wants to study the subject concerned. Disappointing as this book is from the evangelical point of view, it certainly is a work of tremendous erudition, which will have its influence in the ecumenical discussions of our time.

JOHN A. SCHEP.

THE LIVING WORD. A THEOLOGICAL STUDY OF PREACHING AND THE CHURCH

By Gustaf Wingren. Translated from the Swedish *PREDIKAN* by Victor C. Pogue (S.C.M., London), 1960, pp. 223; 25/-.

The English version of Wingren's "Predikan" (1949); German translation "Die Predigt" 1954 and 1959) appears under a new and well chosen title which indicates the scope of the book better than the original title which cannot be well translated. The division into 16 chapters, each comprising three or four paragraphs, instead of the original seven chapters with numerous subtitles, make it easier to read. The translation is complete except for the omission in footnotes of titles and references which are not available to the English reader. Scholars will have to look for them in the German edition. The book is prefaced by Alan Richardson.

English speaking theology is so accustomed to connect the revival of a "theology of the Word" with the names of Barth and Brunner that it will be a surprise to many to discover how theologians of a

definite Lutheran tradition have approached the same problems from a different angle. For nothing less than a theology of the Word is the aim of Wingren, and this book is an attempt to pave the way for it by clarifying theologically what it means that the Church has the task to preach the Word. He tries to overcome the dualism of object and subject, of the Word and the hearing man by the thesis that the Word and man belong always together. In the Bible God's Word and God's people are inseparable. The Word is addressed to man and man becomes what he is and what he is meant to be through the creative and living Word. From this starting point Wingren goes on to a discussion of almost all topics of the Christian doctrine in their relation to the preaching task of the Church. Creation and Redemption, death and resurrection of Christ, Law and Gospel, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Ministry of Reconciliation, the Communion of Saints are some of the main topics of this far-flung discussion of the Church's preaching.

The book shows the strength and the weakness of the "Lundensian School" of modern Swedish theology. Its strength is what this school has learned from Luther: the centrality of Christ, the condescendence of God who enters the human flesh, who is present in the Word. If Real Presence is a characteristic feature of Lutheranism — Wingren speaks of "communication idiomatum" instead — then this book is a witness to Luther's understanding of the divine revelation. On this point Wingren sees the great difference over against Barth and classical Reformed theology. Characteristic of the Lundensians is the emphasis on *Christus Victor* as the Saviour and a lack of understanding of Christ's atoning death as satisfaction.

The weakness of this theological school and also the weakness of this book is a lack of understanding of the Holy Spirit. This would perhaps be the main objection by Reformed theologians, but not only by them. It becomes obvious in the misunderstanding of the Inspiration of the Bible. Wingren rejects it, admitting only the view "that God directed the events that resulted in the writing of the books of the Bible and the work that in time resulted in their being collected into one" (p. 47). This cannot be reconciled with Luther's understanding of the Bible as "the Holy Spirit's book." What modern Lutheranism reads into Luther's utterances about the human side of the Scriptures is absolutely un-Lutheran. He had no theory about the "how" of the Inspiration, but he has never doubted the dogma of the entire Church that the Holy Spirit is the divine *author* of the Scriptures. The lack of an understanding of the Holy Spirit becomes obvious also in Wingren's understanding of the Church. He knows what the ministry of the Church is. What he says about that (pp. 96 ff.), including his criticism of the apostolic succession (101 ff.), belongs to the best parts of the book. But the idea that the Church must be "open," "without questions of membership being raised or . . . being answered" amounts to a glorification of the system of national churches and local parishes which today should have become suspect also to the Christians of Sweden. "The priest exists that the Word and sacraments may move outwards. Out there in many parishes, in homes, in places of work the conflict between God and Satan is being decided . . . Even the bishop himself exists, first of all, for the congregations . . . Afterwards the consequences of all hidden decisions will follow. They follow in the Church Assembly or in Parliament" (189). But Parliament decides, or rather the political powers behind Parliament have decided, the question whether God's Word permits or forbids the ordination of women to the office of a pastor. And the Church Assembly follows suit. And suddenly the congregations are told that they must accept women as pastors. The decision has been made, definitely and irrevoc-

cably. This is the "open" Church. Is it really Christ's Church? If Wingren should bring out in Sweden a new edition of his book, will this answer our question?

H. SASSE.

SHORTER NOTICES

Protestant Patriarch, by G. A. Hadjlantonlou (John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia, \$3.50) is the biography of the remarkable Cyril Lucaris who successively held the sees of Alexandria, 1601-21, and Constantinople, 1621-38. With pronounced Calvinist sympathies, supported by the English and Dutch ambassadors at Constantinople, the Patriarch encountered in his work for the Reformation of the Greek Church the persistent opposition of the revived Congregatio de Propaganda Fide which, in its campaign to conquer the Orthodox Orient for the Roman Church, utilised the French and later the Austrian ambassadors for his final overthrow and death by means of Turkish venality. As the antecedent conditions which paved the way for the Reformation in the West were almost non-existent in the Greek East, the work of Lucaris achieved only a very limited measure of success, the most enduring being the first edition of the N.T. into modern Greek. It is of interest to note that as an expression of gratitude for the protection he had received from the English ambassador the Patriarch sent as a gift to Charles I the Codex Alexandrinus. As an appendix is added an English translation of Cyril's famous *Confessio Fidei*—probably the only published version since the 17th century. "This book opens a wide window on a hitherto blocked view of a momentous affair," writes Albert C. Outler in his Foreword. "It affords a basic reference for Protestants who would like to become knowledgeable in Orthodox history."

Robert Bruce, by D. C. Macnicol, and *Robert Murray M'Cheyne*, by Andrew Bonar (Banner of Truth Trust, London, 2/6 each). Published originally in 1907, the first paperback embodies the only serious biography of the preacher, churchman and theologian whose career bridged the interval between Knox and Melville. his master, on the one hand, and Alexander Henderson, his greatest disciple on the other. Bruce's *Sermons of the Sacrament* (edited and translated by F. T. Torrance in 1958 under the title, *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*), constitute in Professor John Laidlaw's opinion a statement of the Reformed doctrine that has never been excelled, and this valuable book (at its incredible price), with a central chapter on "The Sacrament of the Supper at St. Giles," places this his most enduring legacy in the context of his strenuous life in those stormy years. The *Memoirs of the zealous preacher and evangelist who died at the age of 29 on the eve of the Disruption* were a nineteenth century Evangelical classic with a far-reaching influence. By a strange coincidence M'Cheyne commenced his ministry as an assistant at Larbert near Stirling, where Bruce, to whom he acknowledged his debt, completed his labours and lies buried.

Letters of John Newton, and *The Rich Man and Lazarus*, by Brownlow North (Banner of Truth Trust, 2/6 each). The small collections of 39 letters from the foremost spiritual director of souls in the Evangelical movement of the 18th century covers diverse aspects of Christian experience from "Grace in the Blade" to "The Vanity of the World." The practical exposition of the Gospel parable by the prominent evangelist during the Ulster revival of 1859 has a clear challenging note marked by pointed assertion. E.g., "It is true God is in hell, for God is everywhere; but it is God out of Christ" (p. 48).

Introduction to Dogmatic Theology, by E. A. Litton (James Clarke, London, 27/6), originally published in two parts in 1882 and 1892, expounds the dogmatic position of historic Protestantism, being indirectly a commentary on the Thirty-one Articles. Writing contemporaneously with the emergence of the *Lux Mundi* school in Anglicanism, Litton, in contrast to Roman and Anglo Catholicism as "a religion of the Incarnation, the virtue of which is communicated by sacraments," elucidates Protestantism as "a religion of the Atonement, the virtue of which is appropriated by direct faith in Jesus Christ, not however to the exclusion of the sacraments in their proper place" (xiv). The position is generally that of a modified Calvinism approaching Amyraldianism with its rejection of limited atonement. The Editor, Dr. Philip Hughes, adds a number of critical footnotes which are particularly pertinent with reference to Litton's interpretation of paedobaptism as being of ecclesiastical and not apostolic origin. The republication of this long popular compendium of Dogmatic Theology will be welcomed by Anglican Evangelicals and others with its clear elucidation of the *sola scriptura*: "The New Testament Scriptures are the only Apostolate which the Church now possesses . . . In every Christian society which is in a healthy state Matthew, John, Paul, Peter still decide points of doctrine, order its affairs, and preside in its councils with undisputed authority" (p. 389).

The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. XII, No. 1, April, 1961 (Thomas Nelson and Sons, Edinburgh, 18/-; published twice yearly, subscription 30/-), contains six articles and many book reviews covering a wide range of subjects. Of special interest is the study on *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* (the most important single source for the history of Wycliffe) which traces the transmission of the MS. through John Bale, ex-Carmelite Bishop of Ossory and Archbishop Ussher to its acquisition by the Bodleian Library in 1658. This is a publication of erudite interest.

The Old Testament View of Revelation, by G. S. S. Thomson (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, \$2.50). Defining revelation as the self-disclosure of God this small volume succinctly considers the media and the nature of the God of revelation. A full chapter is devoted to "the Word of the Lord" as the most important medium (organ) of Divine communication for "along with every revelatory act there was the revelatory word" (p. 13). The brief discussion, lucid and valuable, concludes that the divine revelation in the O.T., whilst self-consistent was incomplete and its fulfilment only realised in the self-disclosure of God in Jesus Christ.

A Guide to the Teachings of the Early Church Fathers, by Robert R. Williams (Eerdmans, \$4.00), surveys the development of Christian thought in its varying phases from the Apostolic to the Chalcedonian Fathers. The theological treatment has clarity although some of the historical judgments are to be questioned, such as the statement that in the fourth century after the Edict of Milan "the Church of those days never compromised with the State or gave up any of its peculiar prerogatives" (p. 183). This is a concise compendium to which is added a useful Bibliography.

A Great Scottish Churchman, by R. Strang Miller (Westminster Fellowship, Dunedin, 3/6), gives an interesting sketch of the life, interests and influence of Andrew Thomson, who, in Dr. Hugh Watt's words, "far more than any other had succeeded in rehabilitating Evangelicalism in the eyes of the cultured of Edinburgh, and in reinvigorating it as a force in the councils of the Church" (p. 29). In the absence of a full biography this booklet will provide a useful introduction to this important and significant figure of the early nineteenth century.

The Man God Mastered, by Jean Cadier (I.V.F., London, 8/6), translated by O. R. Johnston, is a brief popular biography of John Calvin which does not seek originality but simply the presentation of the historical data necessary for the evaluation of the life and work of the Reformer. The author, who is a professor at Montpellier, has given an appreciative but factual and balanced portrait with apt illustration which includes as a strange example of Calvin's posthumous fame from 18th century Germany his profile made up almost entirely of verses of Scripture. There are included in an appendix most useful Bibliographical Notes by J. I. Packer which competently surveys the field of contemporary Calviniana for English readers.

Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries, by Joachim Jeremias (S.C.M., London, 12/6). Here the N.T. evidence is first considered retrospectively, the 'oikos' formula being adapted from the cultic language of circumcision and the theological terminology of the primitive Christian rite borrowed from the realm of proselyte baptism. Then prospectively such passages as the Blessing of the Children are interpreted through the theology and practice of the early Church. Skilfully using indirect archaeological as well as literary evidence the distinguished author concludes that the practice of infant baptism, which both East and West in the second century agreed in tracing back to the Apostles, originated in the first century.

The Theological Foundation of Law, by Jacques Ellul (S.C.M., 18/-) rejects the concept of natural law as a rational creation of man in whom the imago Dei has been destroyed. "Natural law is nothing but absolutised terrestrial law" (p. 64). In contrast the foundation of genuine law is based on God's revelation in Jesus Christ in whom "neither distributive nor retributive, as in all human justice, divine righteousness is substitutive" (p. 43). The elements of human law include basic institutions, human rights and relative justice, yet the function of such law is but "the human, partial and contingent realisation of a covenant which will be fulfilled only at the end of time" (p. 99). This Christocentric interpretation by a professor of law at Bordeaux reflects the influence of Barth though that theologian is dubiously criticised as one who "almost seems" (p. 122) to justify the role of the omnipotent state to the exclusion of any concept of justice. This provocative volume concludes that the Church alone can give to law its foundation and meaning as being part of the witness of God's righteousness accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Ethics and the Gospel, by T. W. Manson (S.C.M., 12/6). Published posthumously these lectures take the fundamentals of Judaism as expressed in the maxim of Simeon the Righteous that the world rests on three pillars—the Law, Worship and the "imparting of kindness" and considers their restatement as fundamentals of the New Israel as exemplified in the Sermon on the Mount and the primitive Palestinian Church. Observing a tendency in the Gospel tradition to "turn polemical utterance designed for outsiders into exhortations addressed to members of the community" (p. 94) it is commented that "we can give the early Church full marks for diverting the rebukes that were given to outsiders and asking itself, 'where does that touch me?'" Affirming that "the characteristic and hall-mark of the gospel ethic" (p. 62) lies in the affirmation and command, "Love, as I have loved you," Dr. Manson concludes these stimulating lectures by asserting that the Christian ethic, derived from Christ Himself and primarily felt in the community He founded and maintains is a living and growing thing directly relevant to every emergent moral situation.

R. Swanton.

Book Reviews

	Page
GLASSON, T. FRANCIS: <i>Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology</i> By E. A. Judge, M.A., University of Sydney.	88
PAUL, ROBERT S.: <i>The Atonement and the Sacraments</i> By the Rev. R. Swanton, M.A., B.D., Melbourne.	88
RAMM, BERNARD: <i>Special Revelation and the Word of God</i> By the Rev. Professor K. Runia, Th.D., Reformed Theological College, Geelong, Vic.	90
SCHWEIZER, EDUARD: <i>Gemeinde und Gemeindeordnung im Neuen Testament</i>	91
By the Rev. Professor J. A. Schep, Th.M., Reformed Theol- ogical College, Geelong, Vic.	
WINGREN, GUSTAF: <i>The Living Word</i>	92
By the Rev. Professor H. Sasse, D.Theol., Immanuel Theol- ogical Seminary, Adelaide.	
SHORTER NOTICES	94

